Caterpillar to chrysalis to butterfly

Brief summary:

In this activity you will watch the life cycle of a caterpillar and see it go from crawling to chrysalis and to butterfly. WARNING: Some spiders are very dangerous - please ask for help from an adult before touching ANY bugs, spiders or creepy crawlies.

You will need:

- Help from an adult
- Ice-cream tub with lid
- Pencil
- Caterpillar
- Leaves

What to do:

Step 1. With help from an adult, poke a few holes in the lid of a big plastic ice-cream tub with a pencil.

Step 2. Add some twigs into the tub.

Step 3. Go out on a caterpillar hunt. When you find one, carefully put that leaf and the caterpillar in the box with a few more leaves from that same plant.

Step 4. Put the lid on and leave it somewhere warm (DO NOT leave the box in direct sunlight).

Step 5. While checking on your caterpillar every day, keep adding some fresh leaves from the plant you found the caterpillar on.

Step 6. After a couple of weeks, the caterpillar should make a small, brown, case-like shell. Once this happens, check the tub more regularly as the caterpillar will turn into a butterfly or moth. This should take between 7 and 10 days. If this doesn't occur, carefully put it back outside and let it happen naturally.

Step 7. If your moth or butterfly hatches in the tub, remember to release it outside!
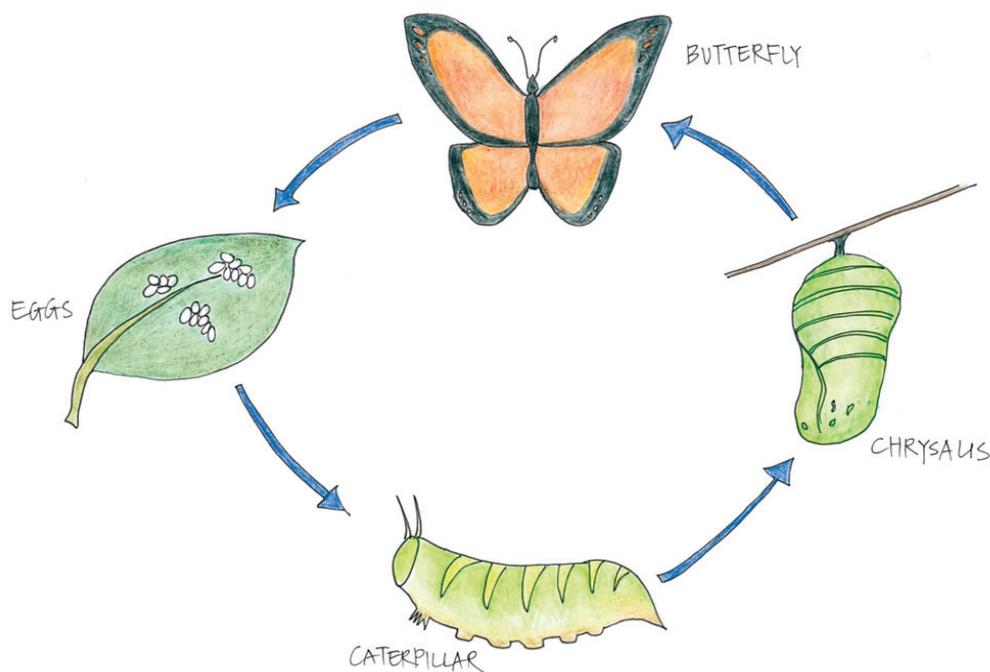
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Take it further:

Take a photo of your caterpillar every day (or several times a day) to create a stop-motion film of the life cycle of a butterfly.

Have a look at our other bug activity: *Bug watch!*

Big questions:

- What role do butterflies have in our ecosystem?
- What other animal life cycles do you know?
- Can you find any other bug eggs in the garden (DON'T TOUCH!!!)?

BUTTERFLY

CHRYSALIS

CATERPILLAR

EGGS

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